

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

[61] 1. In a method of operating an electronic machine of the type having a touch screen upon which buttons are displayed for operator input or selection by the operator placing or sliding a finger on at least one of the desired buttons, the improvement comprising:

displaying a plurality of buttons on the screen, with each of the plurality of buttons having visually defined boundaries on the screen;

defining an enlarged sensitive area for each button having a larger area than the visually defined boundary for that button;

activating the enlarged sensitive area for a first button when a finger touch which is still touching the screen is sensed for said first button and concurrently highlighting the visually defined boundary for said first button;

registering a button selection for said first button when the finger touch is released anywhere within the enlarged sensitive area for said first button;

highlighting said first button when a finger which is still touching the screen exits the enlarged sensitive area of said first button without being released, and, when finger touch is sensed from finger placement on or finger sliding on a visually defined boundary for a second button with said previously highlighted first button being unhighlighted, activating the enlarged sensitive area for said second button and concurrently highlighting the visually defined boundary for said second highlighted button.

[62] 2. In a method of operating an electronic machine of the type including a pointing device, with the electronic machine having a visual screen upon which buttons or selection areas are displayed for operator

input or selection by the operator moving the pointing device such that a visual indication of the pointing device is moved on the visual screen to lie within a button or selection area, and with selection of a button or selection area occurring by activating a selection control of the pointing device, the improvement comprising;

- displaying a plurality of buttons or selection areas on the screen, with each of the plurality of buttons or selection areas having visually defined boundaries on the screen,

- defining an enlarged sensitive area for each button or selection area having a larger area than the visually defined boundary for that button or selection area,

- activating the enlarged sensitive area for a particular button or selection area when a visual indication corresponding to a pointing device is sensed within that button or selection area and concurrently highlighting the visually defined boundary for that button or selection area,

- registering a button or selection area selection for a highlighted button when the selection control of the pointing device is activated while the visual indication of the pointing device is within the enlarged sensitive area for that highlighted button,

- unhighlighting a highlighted button or selection area when a visual indication of the pointing device exists the enlarged sensitive area of a button or selection area without the selection control of the pointing device being activated, and after a previously highlighted button or selection area has been unhighlighted, highlighting a different button or selection area when a visual indication of the pointing device is sensed within the visually defined boundary for that different button or selection area, and concurrently activating the enlarged sensitive area for that different highlighted button or selection area.